

**City of Falls Church
Economic Development Authority
FINAL Meeting minutes
Tuesday, May 2, 2006 – 6:30 p.m.
Training Room
Level G, City Hall**

I. Call to Order

EDA Chairman Ed Saltzberg called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Present:

EDA Board Members: Ed Saltzberg, Barry Buschow, Bob Butchko, Warren Cohen, A.C. Miller, Bruce Swenson

ED Staff: Rick Goff, Becky Witsman, Lovey Testa

Others Attending: Heather Arnold

Absent: Dan Sze (excused)

II. Petitions from the Public (5 minutes per petitioner) - None

III. Petitions from the Board (5 minutes per petitioner) – A.C. Miller inquired about Item 6 in the April draft minutes on Warren Cohen agreeing to contact Dan McKeever to discuss the EDA Board's increased involvement in the City's development process. Ed Saltzberg responded by saying that he will try to meet with Mr. McKeever.

Bob Butchko acknowledged that a lot of good ideas have been heard in reference to branding, and that building a brand for the City will be an on-going process.

IV. Approval of March 2006 Minutes – A.C. Miller abstained from voting. The other Board Members present approved the March 2006 Minutes.

V. Approval of April 2006 Minutes – Unanimously approved with revisions, as discussed..

VI. New Business

a. Report on Retail Marketing Strategy (Heather Arnold)

Heather began her report by indicating her five-point process for the Retail Marketing Strategy. The first process: was looking into what other Economic Development Offices around the country are doing. The second process centered on the Branding Strategy workshop. Heather reported that this went well since the participants provided and received useful information. This would thereby enable us to produce a brochure, the primary marketing piece to be used by the Economic Development Office. The third process was the meeting she had with six retailers to find out how they perceived Falls Church and alternatively, what they needed to know about the City. The

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retailers provided Heather their input, but also gave her the impression that their knowledge about the City was obsolete. In this regard, Heather is currently preparing materials for the Economic Development Office, e.g., vacant parcels of land for lease, etc. The fourth process will be to provide staff with a list of targeted retailers for solicitation and attraction to Falls Church while she goes on maternity leave (her delivery date is anticipated to be mid-June). Heather emphasized the importance of giving the City a distinguishing identity, particularly based on the current developments, e.g., City Center, The Byron, Pearson Square, etc. There was a lively discussion about whether the slogan for the retail recruitment campaign should contain “City of Falls Church or simply “Falls Church”. The discussion led to a consensus among Board Members that “City of” should be part of the slogan.

The fifth process focuses on the brochure. Heather presented a document entitled, “City of Falls Church Draft Slogans for Retail Marketing Campaign April 2006”, which lists the following: *Descriptive Words from the Workshop*; *Genesis*; *Preferred Alternative (Logo Slogan, Common Slogan and Extended Slogan)*; and *Images with Words (three images with “Falls Church, Virginia” at the bottom)*. The discussion centered on the logo (should be succinct, more accommodating; other catchy phrases suggested by some Board Members) and the three alternative images created by the City’s Graphic Designer, Frank Sottile. The brochure will be an 11 by 17 inch folded sheet. The front will depict why Falls Church is engaging; the back will show the retail analysis; and the inside part will highlight the existing retail areas over 25,000 sq. ft, and most importantly, will address the retailers’ five areas of concern: density, income, daytime population, traffic counts and education level. Heather expressed optimism that this particular project will be done before her delivery date.

b. Any other new business

Bob Butchko provided a synopsis on the violation made by Hollywood Video and Waterford Development by erecting parking signs advising the public they are only allowed to park 20 minutes in the parking lot along West Broad Street. John Boyle, Zoning Director, made repeated efforts to diplomatically resolve the situation with Waterford, but to no avail. The latest development is that the City will physically remove said signs on May 8, 2006.

VII. Old Business - None

VIII. Staff Reports

a. Development Projects

Rick Goff and Becky Witsman informed the Board about the Planning Commission meeting that occurred on May 1, 2006, and the discussion regarding the “Northgate” mixed-use development proposal at 472 N. Washington Street.

Rick also described the status on the City Center. He reported that there have been informative meetings with Centex and Atlantic Realty, but would rather disclose more details in a Closed Session. The Motion to go into Closed Session for the purpose of going into further detail on this matter was then presented by Bruce Swenson at 8:00 p.m.; seconded by Warren Cohen. All other Board members voted to go into Closed Session. The Closed Session adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

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As the Open Session commenced again, Rick continued to report about the progress of the developer, Hekemian, on the former funeral home. The Hekemian project involves 124 apartment units over retail space, with two or three levels of underground parking space. Hekemian presented its designs to the City Council Work Session with the Planning Commission, which also occurred on May 1. One main criticism Hekemian needs to address is on the percentage of commercial space, which is 14 percent of its project. Nevertheless, this matter will go into First Reading, tentatively set on May 22, but Rick anticipates it will more likely be sometime in June. A decision should be made after July 1, 2006.

Rick also said to expect a proposal on the Gateway property at 500 N. Washington Street from Akridge. Gateway is a Mixed-Use Development project near the Arlington County border, with approximately 25 percent commercial space.

b. Business Assistance Activities

Rick provided the Board Members copies of the Rockville Town Center Report, which he prepared in 2004. Rick requested the Board to review the report because it contains information pertinent to issues involved in our own City Center project.

The Board Members also discussed the following points: there should be more EDA involvement in the development process; development should focus more around the North Washington Street corridor; and the need to have more guidance on “green”, i.e., environmentally efficient, buildings.

Becky Witsman reported on Bob Young’s request for a Site Plan Amendment on the Panera building. Mr. Young intends to put a Japanese restaurant and a dry-cleaning service in the building.

c. Upcoming Meetings – Next EDA Board Meeting is scheduled on June 6, 2006.

IX. EDA Member Reports

Ed Saltzberg said he would e-mail the EDA Board Members with a one to two page document outlining the key points of their respective assignments.

X. Other Business – None

XI. Adjournment - meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.